[This transcript was created by LAI staff. It is as true a representation of the original as we could create. When a word was too difficult to decipher or was questionable we put those words in brackets. All text in brackets represents the voice of the transcriber rather than the voice of the letter writer. We have not maintained the spacing that exists in the original letters because that was not compliant with our accessibility standards. We are left justifying most lines.]

[citation information]
Collection title: Corcoran Gallery of Art and Corcoran College of Art + Design, Corcoran Gallery of Art directors' records
collection number: COR-0002-0-RG
Series 1: MacLeod, Barbarin and McGuire records
Subseries 1: Indexed correspondence
Box 2008-001
Folder 1: Letters 1-10

[Letter 1]

[printed letter head: Gas fixtures. Paris Bronzes. Parian and Bisque Figures, Fancy Goods, &c. Gas Fittings in all its branches]

State of New York
Office of Inspector of Gas Meters
561 Broadway
New York November 17th, 1860

Mr. Renwick,

Dear sir We will furnish and insert the Gas Pipes in Mr. Corcoran's House in Washington City, including the stove cook, the whole to be done in accordance with the specifications for the sum of Seven Hundred and Forty dollars $740.00.

We will also furnish and put in the Galleries [?ing] pipe, with handsome fasteners, for hanging the Pictures for the sum of Three Hundred and Sixty two dollars $362.00

We will also furnish and put up the Gas Fixtures of the richest [styles?] as per accompanying list for the Sum of Twenty-Eight Hundred and Ninety-Eight dollars $2898.00

Yours truly Geo. [H] Kitchen & Co.

[Back of letter 1]

Geo H. Kitchen & Co.
on Nov. 17th 1860
Offer for gas pipes

Picture rods + gas fixtures

[Letter 2]

New York
Monday May 10th

Hon. W.W Corcoran

Sir:

I have noticed lately in one of our journals the fact of the establishment or erection of a "[National] gallery" for works of art in this country, with the surprising addition, that it comes from the hands of an individual and not the [nation?]. Of course, artists will rejoice at such intelligence as well as their interpretations. I feel a deep gratitude to him who takes the first step to secure [to] them a more certain future. That has been my impulse; the idea of having a temple or shrine where travelers, students, thinkers or the recreating laborer can enter for reflection on things more [illegible word] more encouraging than their daily earnings or [vain?] [researches?].

I hope you will not misjudge these few reflections and regard them as vanity but as an answer to my earnestness and willingness to enter as a builder of its treasures. None of us find treasures on every spot of earth nor in every moment of thought; but when we do it is a human duty to give others their fill according to their capacities not hide them in our cellars. There are certain precepts, truths or things that we cannot consciously give ourselves worldly approbations for or desire others to, unless it be an acknowledgement of our [illegible word]; but what we do long for suffer for is that [illegible word] should accept them have faith in them, or in fewer words open the senses of their souls and learn of the high the god-like.

I would not have written this if I had not already conceived designed my picture embodying meditations study of our moral nature or over nature in relation to ourselves and god.

You may understand now why [illegible word] in the hope of securing to my work a freedom that few people or things have. [It may?] interest you to know that I conceived it after having engaged in a prolonged dispute on the body's relation to the soul + from the result I named it "Sacredness recognized". it is composed of two figures who show by their position, action + faces to have [ap?] their minds to each other from this moment of revelation and their [illegible word] becoming [apparent] their bodies respond as the body does when the mind is as high-strung, they involuntarily perform this action of recognition.

It is difficult to speak the price of such labor, but the necessity of living impels us to resort to anything. I have been anxious to secure some patrons here but the absence of much public reputation + the [enthusiasm?] [illegible word] for those already in [illegible word] reader [is?] almost impossible for the young artist to paint his pictures that came from his serious thought. But when I saw the report of such a blessing I hailed it + hoped I might hang on his walls this work if completed. I have written thus, at length without apology or introduction to you. I hope (not because my letter is long) that you will favor me with a reply

With respect [S] W. Van Schaick

[Letter 3]

[Front of letter 3]
Thos. Blackburn
May 13th 1869
Offer to sell “Washington” by Stuart

2302 Lombard Street
Philadelphia
May 13th 1869

W.W. Corcoran
My dear Sir

I have an original portrait of general Washington painted by “Gilbert Stewart”, which has been in the [passed?] [illegible word] of my family for more than half a century; it is in splendid presentation, and has been [pronounced?] by [W Sully?] and other distinguished artists, as the very best portrait [illegible word].

I am desirous of [disposing?] of it, and have been recommended to write to you upon the subject, with that view, so that it may be included in the “National Gallery,” which, through your munificence, is to be established in the National Capitol. My price for the picture is $5,000 - though its intrinsic value is far greater.

Waiting your reply

Gracious
My dear sir
Yours respectfully [illegible word]
Thos. Blackburn

[Letter 4]

Roxborough, Philad[elphia]
May 13, 1869

W.W. Corcoran Esq.

Sir:

By the inauguration of National Gallery of great paintings at Washington, I rejoice that you have fulfilled a hope, the realization of which I have longed and looked forward to for the last 15 years, having possessed, during that period, a painting which I was exceedingly desirous should remain in this country - recently however, almost despairing, I committed the disposal of it to J. H. Harjes Esq of the firm Drexell [should be spelled with one l] & Harjes Bankers, Paris,

the painting being the negative of Titian and his mistress in the Louvre, it was thought the French Govt. might desire to possess it.

Without [depreciating] the excellence of modern art, it is nevertheless quite out of the question to suppose, that a gallery becoming this Country can be fully established without rare undoubted originals of the finest quality and if possible unique [illegible word] of the great old masters; and when such are bringing, now in Europe, prices unprecedented hitherto, as shown by recent sales in Paris of small paintings on inferior subjects it would seem exceedingly unwise to allow to pass from us superior gems, which could never be regained.

Therefore, at the earliest moment, after hearing of your munificent donation and designs, I hasten to inform you that I possess the greatest and most remarkable painting, all things considered, in the world [viz.?] the original uncopied long lost (for 200 years) painting of Titian and his wife - painted by him in his old age, after the Council of Trent - decided marriage to be a sacrament - the subject is conjugality and legitimacy. In Motts life of Titian it is referred to as lost, but known through an Etching by Vandyke.

All painters, experts, [learners?] and amateurs of this and foreign countries, who have seen it, admit its originality. It was found in the interior of Spain by the British representative his name was Ricketts (I forget his title). I will not enter into further particulars, if it is deemed important I will be pleased to be advised, merely saying however, I would rather sell for retention in my Country at half the price expected from abroad.

As it may shortly be desired in Europe to be submitted to Experts there, if you desire I will detain it for a reasonable time.

Very truly,
and Respectfully
T. Mason Mitchell

[Backside of letter 4]
T. Mason Mitchell
May 13, 1869
Offer to sell “Titian and his mistress”

[Letter 5]

[note: this letter is very difficult to read and that is reflected in missing words in this transcript]

[front of letter 5]
Jas. M. Carlisle Esq.
May 14th, 1896
About Trustees meeting

[May 14th]

My dear MacLeod

It occurs to me that at the meeting tomorrow, a [illegible word] better [illegible word] the [illegible word] [illegible word] is Wm. Corcoran and if nothing better is proposed I [illegible word] the [illegible word].

If your [agree?] [with ?] me, please [illegible word] it [illegible word] probably, a [illegible word] paper, + [illegible word] all over it.

It is [illegible word] [illegible word] [illegible word] of the [illegible word]
[illegible word]
[M?]

a. Hyde [Esq?]

[Letter not numbered]
May 13

My dear MacLeod,

I have been all this week, + yet am, [illegible word] [illegible word] in an [illegible word] [illegible word] it [illegible word] [illegible word] [illegible word] to that I [? only level [illegible word] deed is that [illegible word] a repeat that he would [illegible word] it to Mr. Cocoran, to he send to Wm. Walter.

It seems to me that we [illegible word] [illegible word] his better with [illegible word] more than the [illegible word] of the deed. What do you think?

We better [illegible word] [illegible word] [illegible word] the deed, [illegible word] me [illegible word] Hall.

I [illegible word] that it, will a that reply [illegible word] by [illegible word], [illegible word] is be furthered
[illegible word]
[J. M Carlisle]

[letter not numbered]
[note: this letter is very difficult to read and that is reflected in missing words in this transcript]

May 6, 69
J.M. Carlisle

My [illegible word]

Under many difficulties - I [wrote?] [illegible word] [illegible word], I have hammered [out?] the [illegible word] - [illegible word][illegible word]
Wm. [illegible word] and you may really [illegible word] I [illegible word] don't it will be proven [illegible word] perfect + I can't [illegible word] it over, as [illegible word] am [illegible word] [illegible word] [illegible word] today.
Respectfully

McG
Wm. Corcoran

[Letter 6]

Office of the Evening Star
Washington 17th May 1896

Dear W. Hyde:

Herewith I send copy of the advertisement of [illegible word] [illegible word] of R.R. at present in effect.

Please hand to the bearer the synopsis of the deed and copy of the Board's reply.

Would there be any objection to your giving me the original draft of [W?]Corcoran's letter in his own hand, which you showed me? If you can favor me with it, I [illegible word] place it with my autograph collection, and value it very highly.
Very truly yours,

S. H. Kauffmann

W: a. Hyde

[Back of letter 6]

S. H. Kauffmann
May 17th, 1869
"Star" reporter, for "copy"

[Letter 7]

[note: this letter is very difficult to read and that is reflected in missing words in this transcript]

43 [h?] D
May 18th 69

My dear Mr. Hyde

I had [illegible word] myself that the stamps [illegible word] [illegible word] be at [illegible word] of 5 [illegible word] [illegible word] [illegible word] - but for [illegible word] [illegible word] with at [illegible word] the collection i [illegible word] [illegible word] [illegible word] = +, he [illegible word] that his [illegible word] offered. I would [illegible word] [illegible word] a [illegible word], [illegible word] will [illegible word], + [illegible word] [illegible word] official [illegible word], [illegible word] that he had offered the [illegible word] - [illegible word] the [illegible word] [illegible word] [illegible word]. I [illegible word] of receipt of [illegible word] of [illegible

word] - who [illegible word] the [illegible word] [illegible word] [illegible word] [illegible word] [illegible word] [illegible word] [illegible word] [illegible word] [illegible word] [illegible word] [illegible word] - [illegible word] [illegible word] [illegible word] [illegible word] [illegible word] [illegible word] receipt.

Yours truly

[J. M. Carlisle]

a. Hyde Esq

[back of first page of letter 7]

J. M. Carlisle
May 18, 1869
Deed stamped and received

[Letter 8]

Boston Athenaeum
Boston My 19, 1869

A. Hyde, Esq.
[Ch" of Com]
Corcoran Art Gallery
Washington, D.C.
Sir,

In reply to your note of the 17th, I am sorry to [say?] we have no rules or regulations which would serve you in the preparation you are making for the Corcoran gallery.

The department of Fine Arts is but a small branch of this institution. Having a number of paintings and [casts?] belonging to the institution, which have a permanent place in the gallery, we, each season, procure from various sources a sufficient number of paintings to cover the remainder of the walls of the gallery, for the Exhibitions. We usually open the gallery about the first of May + close the first of November + charge 35 cts. [cents] entrance. There is no school or Academy connected with the Institution.

Very respectfully
Geo. [word starts with M?] [illegible word]
for the committee on Fine Arts

Boston Athenaeum
May 19, 1869

[Letter 9]

Treasury Department
Office of the Supervising Architect
May 21, 1896

Wm. [word starts with Ja?] G. Perret
Dear Sir,

Having been informed by some friends that you and your associates were desirous of obtaining the services of an architect to supervise the completion of the art Building so generously donated by W.W. Corcoran Esq. to the citizens of Washington, feeling a deep interest in the advancement of the fine arts and being desirous of doing all in my power to promote the improvement of this city. I take the liberty of offering my services to the trustees in any capacity that will aid them in carrying out the objects of the noble bequest of Mr. Corcoran. The only remuneration I desire is the gratification of being able to contribute in a small degree to the announcement of the great work which you have undertaken.

Very Respectfully
Your [illegible word] servent
A. B. Mullett

[back of letter 9]

A.B. Mullett
Architect
21 May 1869
offering services gratis

[Letter 10]

Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts
Philadelphia May 25, 1869

A. Hyde Esq.

Dear Sir

I send you a copy of our Constitution and Bylaws and the Programmes of our several studies in the classes of our art school.

I do not think we have anything else that is at all applicable. Perhaps there are not, owning to the difference probably in the nature of the Institutions.

I have concluded to add a catalogue of the present Spring Exhibitions, for the reason that you will find on the inside pages of the cover, brief condensed statements of the working of our academy, its government and instruction.

Yours respectfully,
John Sartain
[illegible word] Sec.

[Back of letter 10]

Penn Academy
May 21, 1869
Mr. Sartain An. Sec.
Sending copies of Bylaws [etc.]